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Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Letter dated 19 December 2005 from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee to the President of the General Assembly

I am writing in response to your letter dated 9 December 2005 concerning your request that the Fifth Committee conduct deliberations on the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/568 and Corr.1 and 2) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/60/7/Add.23) concerning the implementation of decisions from the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

I wish to inform you that the Fifth Committee has engaged in extensive consultations on the aforementioned issues since Saturday, 17 December, following the submission of the reports, with a view to recommending a draft resolution for the consideration of the plenary in accordance with its normal procedures. In this regard, the Committee has made progress on the following elements:

Ethics office

The Committee has reached a consensus on the establishment of an ethics office and has agreed on its functions, scope of operations, including the administration of enhanced financial disclosure regulations and whistleblower protection policy, and reporting requirements. Furthermore, there is general agreement on the resource requirements for the office, with the exception of the level of its head.

Independent external evaluation of audit and oversight systems and the comprehensive review of governance structures

The Committee has also arrived at a consensus regarding the necessity to separate the independent external evaluation of auditing and oversight systems from the comprehensive governance review. Both would have separate terms of reference, which are currently being worked out by the Secretariat through consultations with the Committee. The collective view of the Committee is that these studies should be completed expeditiously and submitted to the General Assembly. There is also

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consensus that the independent external evaluation of auditing and ov
systems should be submitted before the comprehensive governance review, i
as feasible.

Independent audit advisory committee

Regarding the proposal to establish an independent audit advisory com
active consultations are still under way. Divergent views in this regard hav
expressed. Some delegations stressed the importance of its immediate establis
believing it to be an essential element of the reform agenda, while others
with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrativ
Budgetary Questions that the proposal be considered in the context of the rev
the external evaluation of the auditing and oversight systems referred to
Others expressed disagreement with the proposed establishment of the commit

I wish to inform you that the Fifth Committee is currently actively engag
intensive consultations to reach agreement on the remaining elements, as well
finalizing a draft resolution encompassing the agreements reached, wi
understanding that nothing is agreed until all is agreed.